

THE BILL WILKERSON HEARING AND SPEECH CENTER
NASHVILLE 4, TENNESSEE

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April 20, 1959

Congressman John E. Fogarty
House Office Building
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Congressman Fogarty:

No one recognizes the importance more than I of the work that is being done by the colleges training professional personnel as teachers of the deaf. They have made a tremendous contribution to this nation, and should continue to do so. Gallaudet College is an outstanding example of the fine work that is done in this field. I appreciate the confidence you have shown by referring Dr. Elstat's letter to me, and feel that the points made in the letter in regard to your bill are well taken.

In his third paragraph he states, "Those training centers located in large universities such as the one in Tennessee are more interested in speech correction for those having normal hearing and those having a slight loss of hearing." This statement is incorrect. Training centers, such as ours, located throughout the country, work with all of the problems of speech pathology and audiology and with the speech and hearing of the so-called totally deaf. To emphasize this point, may I say that we have several teachers of the deaf here in Nashville.

Now, in regard to your bill, H.J. 316. It is my understanding, after carefully reviewing this bill, that it proposes grants for degrees in speech pathology and audiology on an all-inclusive basis, and certainly it should. Section 5, under "Definition" defines the word, "audiology," as meaning the diagnosis, rehabilitation, and training of persons who are deaf or suffering impairment of hearing, which to me seems very clear. Under "Grants," Section 2, it is stated, "have a department of speech pathology and audiology, etc." Therefore, it appears to me that the inferred criticism by Dr. Elstat is not valid. I would like to reiterate that, in my opinion, this bill cares for graduate training in the hearing and speech field in its entirety, and this is as it should be. We anticipate that new graduate teaching programs in audiology, speech pathology, including teachers of the deaf will be developed when your bill becomes a reality.

If you like, I shall be very glad to send Dr. Elstat a copy of this letter, or you may do so. I shall await instructions from you on this matter.

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Congressman John E. Fogarty

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You will be interested in knowing that I wrote Senator Lister Hill in regard to introducing Bill H.J. 316 into the Senate, and though he stated that you had not discussed the matter with him, he was very interested. Since a training program is being developed at the University of Alabama in Birmingham, and since many people in Alabama are vitally interested in this measure, I believe that Senator Hill will cooperate completely with you. I shall be interested in his comments after you have discussed the matter with him.

I am sorry that Bill H.J. 316 is requiring so much of a busy man's time. However, I presume that such is a normal pattern in the life of a great statesman. My kindest personal regards and best wishes are extended to you.

Yours very faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. W. Wilkerson, Jr.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

W. W. Wilkerson, Jr. M. D.

WWW/ap